

V22 Workspace Creche

V22's first Workspace Creche is opening in September 2017. Our aim is to provide a space for artists, freelancers and entrepreneurs, who are also parents, to work alongside a creche facility for their children. The enterprise is run by V22 Foundation - a not-for-profit organisation - and, if successful, we want to make such an offer an integral part of V22's studio and workspace buildings across the city.

Our business plan is based on the most affordable model we could come up with. We have tried to build flexibility into it without escalating administration costs, and hope we may grow to be more flexible as we settle into our daily rhythms.

What we want to create, in partnership with our parents and carers, is an ethos of co-caring for our children in an environment built on a child-centered approach to daily routines which celebrates the importance of play.

We believe, like Albert Einstein, that *play is the highest form of research*, and we take seriously our commitment to a child-led approach, not only to play, but also to the changing design of the creche space, the choice of books for our library, and even visits to the local market to choose fruit and vegetables for snack time.

We have included here some often-asked questions and their answers which we hope will help you to understand more about how we operate, and decide if you would like to join us.

Who will be looking after my child?

Our creche manager is Thomas Quinn, he has been working in early years since he was 18. For the past 10 years he has been working in an Ofsted 'Outstanding' Children's Centre in Hackney. He will be instrumental in developing our first Workspace Creche, creating a caring and stimulating environment, and supporting the development of our children.

We felt it was very important that Tom built his own team, which he is in the process of doing. In the meantime parents and carers are helping out in the creche.

Where is the creche?

The creche is in a lovely large space on the ground floor of our Dalston building on Ashwin Street, E8. Next door to the creche is the desk space area, which has 11 permanent desks and 2 flexi-desks. Upstairs are a variety of artists' studios and an office space.

How does the deskpace work?

You can either book a dedicated desk or a month's worth of flexi-desking sessions. You sign a 6-month licence but can give one month's notice on the 1st of any month. A dedicated desk has 24-hour access 7 days per week. You can have one named sharer for your desk. There is superfast broadband in the building, lockers and a buggy store. We are also in the process of building a tea station.

Can I rent a desk without using the creche?

Only as a sharer of a parent/carer that you know. Each desk tenant is allowed one named sharer and this can be someone who does not use the creche.

Can I use the creche without renting a desk?

Only if you are a tenant of the building, i.e. if you have a studio upstairs.

How does the waiting list for studios work?

Studios here are very desirable so do not often become available. When they do, existing tenants who want to use the creche are prioritised. If you were a deskpace tenant already using the creche you would have first option on a studio.

When is the creche open?

Creche sessions run Monday to Friday during holidays and term times. Other than any possible closure we may have to effect due to emergencies, we only shut for two weeks over Christmas and New Year.

Our morning session runs from 9:00 - 12:00 and our afternoon session from 13:30 - 16:30. You can come for part of a session but the full session fee will still be payable.

How do I book in creche sessions?

Sessions are booked on a month-by-month basis.

We ask you to fill in a booking-in form at your settling in session for a typical month - this then provides us with your timetable.

For many parents, this will not change from month to month; other parents may want to be more flexible.

You can fill in a month's booking-in form and send it to us at least 5 working days before that month starts. We will notify you if we cannot allocate all your chosen days to you for any reason and offer you alternatives.

If you do not fill in a month's booking form you will be booked and charged according to your standard timetable.

Your standard timetable can be changed, but again we require notification 5 working days before the month in which the changes will take effect.

Any additional sessions which have spare places available are made known to you on a monthly and then a weekly basis and are booked on a first-come-first-served basis.

What if I need extra sessions?

Let us know as soon as possible and we will try to accommodate you.

Is there a minimum and maximum number of sessions I can book?

You must book a minimum of 2 sessions per week.

The maximum number of sessions is 10 sessions for the week, however, Ofsted guidelines (to which we adhere) specify that, as a creche rather than a nursery, we should not have sole care of your child for more than 4 hours per day.

This means that if you book two sessions on the same day, then you can either bring the child for shorter sessions, or you, your partner, or a named carer must spend at least two hours of that day with us and the child.

What are the fees payable?

You pay £400 per month for a dedicated desk space and 2 x 3 hour creche sessions per week. Flexi-desking is priced on a per person basis because it depends on how often you want to use the creche.

This fee is all inclusive – no extra service charge, rates bill or utilities are payable.

Additional creche sessions are booked at £20 per session.

How do I pay?

You pay for the desk space monthly in advance by standing order on the first of every month.

For the creche sessions you also pay a month in advance according to your timetable or booking-in form.

How much notice do I need to give if I want to leave?

One month to be given at the beginning of the month.

Can I leave the premises at all whilst my child is in the creche?

No, unless one of the child's other named carers is on the premises. We cannot operate as a creche if you are not on site. Being a creche significantly reduces our administration costs and makes this a more affordable solution for all of us.

What if I want to see my child during the day?

Our entire set up is designed so that we can remain hands-on parents whilst still getting some concentrated work done.

However, we ask that you not pop into the creche on a whim because this can be disruptive for all the children, and may prevent your child from settling in easily.

Your child may get upset and miss you during the settling in period - this can last for up to 6 weeks generally.

If your child gets distressed and cannot be soothed we will always call you without delay.

Equally, if your child celebrates a major milestone - first steps, first words, an excellent achievement of some kind - we will also call you without delay, so that you do not miss out on these special moments.

What if my child is ill?

Please read our sickness policy on when and when not to bring your child into creche if they are ill.

We want to keep all our children healthy, and things like a temperature or diarrhoea mean your child will need to stay at home.

We cannot refund your fee if your child is ill; please understand we would have already booked the staff required for that day, and our costs will still be the same.

What activities are included?

- a library session with a librarian on Monday mornings at Dalston library. The children choose the selection of books they bring back to refresh our creche library for story time.
- daily visits and regular access to workshops and playtime in the lovely Dalston Eastern Curve Garden.
- regular visits to Ridley Road Market to choose seasonal fruit and veg for snack time.
- a monthly rotating artwork which is discussed and used as inspiration for art classes, story time and conversation periods.
- weekly rotation of toys and play activities.

We would also like to start messy play/music/language sessions/(put your idea here), but want to choose these additional activities in collaboration with our children and their parents or carers.

How can I get more involved in the creche?

Parents have already offered to hold workshops for the children on their specialisms or hobbies. So far these include growing plants, looking at art, and painting. We would love more parents to get involved in this way to offer our children a wide selection of activities and forms of enrichment.

We also encourage parents to get involved through working at the creche. We offer a work one session (with your child free of charge), and get another session completely free. We love the co-operative model of childcare and believe it adds to the culture of co-caring which our creche is trying to provide.